



THE  
**WILDERNESS**  
— S O C I E T Y —

April 28, 2010

Dear Senator Lautenberg:

As leaders of organizations that are working to improve local communities, protect national landscapes, and move our country off of its dependence on fossil fuel, we want to thank you for your leadership and introduction of the Cleanfields Act of 2010. This bill is a creative way to combine the generation of clean renewable energy on brownfield sites without spending any federal funds.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors has long helped cities clean up idle and abandoned sites that pose a drain on the governments, environment, and communities around them. Many brownfield sites once were hubs for industry and business, but now pose a real challenge to the cities and towns that struggle to procure the funds needed for clean up. To mayors, city planners, and other officials, brownfield sites represent tremendous potential to create jobs and revitalize neighborhoods, if only they could be put back on the tax rolls.

But at the same time that brownfields languish in hopes of redevelopment, many pristine and undeveloped sites are facing the threat of energy sprawl from large, industrial renewable energy projects. The Wilderness Society is working to protect natural areas and to guide renewable energy development to the most appropriate places. This includes taking advantage of lands that have already been disturbed or contaminated such as brownfields.

A recent survey by the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory found that over 4,000 brownfield sites across the country have renewable energy potential. The sites are generally either close to load or already a part of the grid, minimizing the need to build transmission infrastructure often needed for large renewable energy projects.

Incentivizing developers and utilities to select brownfield sites for their renewable energy projects can be accomplished in a way that does not require federal grants or other funding. A triple credit multiplier for renewable energy credits in the Renewable Electricity Standard is a no-cost way to help clean up communities and site renewable energy in the best places. By prioritizing these sites, we can help meet our national demand for renewable energy while lessening pressure on greenspaces and providing economic and social benefits for the communities that need them the most.

Thank you again for your leadership with the Cleanfields Act. We look forward to helping it move through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Cochran". The script is cursive and fluid.

Tom Cochran  
CEO and Executive Director  
The U.S. Conference of Mayors

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Meadows". The script is cursive and fluid.

Bill Meadows  
President  
The Wilderness Society